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ABSTRACT

Investigations into job preference have as their underlying premise the belief that congruity between individual and institutional values leads to career choice/job satisfaction. In an attempt to replicate a recent study (Blumenfeld, 1982) on the job preferences of a group of potential psychologists, 66 graduate psychology students at a large Rocky Mountain university (48 percent male, median age 26), completed The Job Preferences Blank. The students ranked ten factors, (i.e., advancement, benefits, company, co-workers, hours, pay, security, supervisor, working conditions and type of work) under two conditions, self preferences and perception of others' preferences. An analysis of results showed group demographics to be essentially similar. Self hierarchies, in order of preference, (type of work, pay, co-workers, supervisor, advancement, security, working conditions, hours, benefits, and company) corresponded nearly perfectly in the two studies, with the current study ranking security slightly higher. Others' preferences (pay, type of work, advancement, security, benefits, co-workers, supervisor, hours, working conditions, and company) also corresponded in the two studies. In the current study, self and others' preferences are related to a large degree, while in the earlier study they were only marginally related. Although generalization of these findings is cautioned against, these data are of practical utility to students, universities, and employing organizations. (BL)

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JOB PREFERENCES OF ANOTHER GROUP OF POTENTIAL PSYCHOLOGISTS: A RECOMMENDED REPLICATION

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Job Preferences of Another Group of Potential Psychologists: A Recommended Replication

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Over the past few years Blumenfeld and his associates (Blumenfeld, Daves, Zimmatore, and Jourdan, 1982; Blumenfeld, Sawyer, Mescon, and Hoiland, 1980; Blumenfeld, Zimmatore, and Mescon, 1981) have been investigating preferences of groups of university students for various aspects of work. The premise of these investigations is that if the values of the individual are incongruent with the values of the institution, the individual will forsake the institution (Blumenfeld, 1965). Thus, it becomes important to understand preferences at an early stage of career development. The purpose of the current study was to replicate Blumenfeld's 1382 study of potential psychologists, to compare psychology students' preferences with the preferences of two other samples of management students, and to compare these students' preferences with data collected from job applicants by Jurgensen (1978) over a 30-year period.

Jurgensen (1978) reported an extensive study over a 30-year period in which 57,000 job applicants of a public utility ranked the importance of 10 factors that they perceived make a job good or bad. The instrument itself (Job Preferences blank) has an extensive background (Jurgensen, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1961, 1967). Last year at the Southeastern Psychological Association, Blumenfeld et al. (1982) reported a study in which they investigated, using the Job Preferences blank, job preferences of a group of potential psychologists, recommending that the study be replicated.

The Original Study with Psychologists

In that study, the importance of understanding career motivations of graduate students in psychology from the points of view of (1) students, (2) universities, and (3) employing organizations, was indicated. The overall purpose of that

empirical study was to describe values, in terms of job preferences, of a group of potential psychologists. Specific sub-purposes were to investigate (1) interrater reliability of self preferences, (2) interrater reliability of preferences attributed to others, and (3) relationship between self and others' preferences.

Participants were 99 graduate students enrolled in graduate psychology programs at a large urban university in the Southeast. Dependent variable was the Job Preferences blank. Respondents ranked ten job characteristics under two conditions: (1) respondent's preferences (self); and (2) respondent's perception of others preferences (others). The ten factors were Advancement, Benefits, Company, Co-workers, Hours, Pay, Security, Supervisor, Type of Work, and Working Conditions.

Kendall's coefficient of concordance (W) (Siegel, 1956) was obtained to quantify interrater reliability of the self preference ratings and the others preference ratings. Spearman's rank order correlation (Rho) (Siegel, 1956) was obtained to quantify relationship between self and others' preference ratings. Obtained Ws (self and others, respectively) were .38 and .37 (ps $< .01$). Obtained Rho (relationship between self and others) was .55 ($p < .05$).

Potential data limitations were not of sufficient magnitude to preclude data interpretation. However, the caveat regarding generalization (emphasis added) from these findings to other settings was emphasized. Preference hierarchies were rostered and discussed. Implications for education and development of psychologists vis-a-vis students, universities, and employing organizations were indicated.

It was concluded that: (1) self preferences demonstrated adequate interrater reliability (relatively stable preference hierarchy); (2) others preferences demonstrated adequate interrater reliability (relatively stable preference hierarchy); and (3) there was a positive relationship between self and others preferences.

For these particular 99 potential psychologists, there was a relatively stable hierarchy of self and others preferences. The two hierarchies were positively

related. It was recommended that the study be replicated (emphasis added) in other universities and in employing organizations.

The present study follows from that recommendation, i.e., "In terms of the use of this research paradigm outside of the setting of the present study, it would be desirable to replicate the study in other academic settings and in employing organizations. Hierarchies within and across universities and employing organizations may (1) differ, (2) cluster in subsets, or (3) be the same. Our best guess is that they would differ. In any of these events, however, the data would be worthwhile and of utility. The goal of the present research was intended to be situation-specific. It was not intended to be generalizable. The recommended replication (emphasis added), and the accumulation of data (trends), may permit cautious generalization." The present study represents that recommended replication, i.e., use of the research paradigm in another, comparable, setting.

As suggested in the original study, students of Psychology are often present (and/or one of the primary sources of future) psychologists, i.e., potential psychologists. The present authors, also having interest in the career motivations of students of Psychology, concurred that the (re)application of the Jurgensen instrument to another group of potential psychologists would provide additional information of interest and utility (minimally as another local study) from three points of view, i.e., (1) psychology student, (2) university, and (3) employing organization.

Implications vis-a-vis career development and psychologist education and development again seem readily apparent. The question of generalizability of obtained results is also addressed by the present study.

Importance of Understanding Career Motivations of Psychology Students

From the point of view of the psychology student. It seems reasonable to suggest that individuals with a set of job preference values congruent with circumstances surrounding actual work will experience greater job satisfaction than

those individuals for whom the relationship between personal values and realities is zero, or, even worse, negative. Therefore, from the point of view of the psychology student, it would be worthwhile to be aware of, have, and/or develop a hierarchy of job preferences so as to enhance subsequent career satisfaction.

From the point of view of the university. Following from the above, knowledge of psychology graduate student preferences (particularly vis-a-vis university and/or organizational realities) could enhance the efficiency of such traditional university activities as recruiting, selection, counseling, curriculum development, and placement. For example, such data might increase selection system effectiveness for psychology education and development programs, as well as the effectiveness of education and development programs per se. Again, it is suggested that understanding of values could facilitate efficient career development and professional education and development.

From the point of view of the employing organization. Parallel to the above regarding universities, knowledge of graduate student values in juxtaposition with organizational realities might facilitate (make for a better "fit") traditional organizational activities such as recruiting, selection, assimilation, personnel development, and/or organizational development. In the cases of the organization and the university, the condition of the labor market, i.e., number of applicants vis-a-vis number of positions, would indicate whether the individual would have to accommodate the university/organization, or whether the university/organization would have to accomodate the individual.

The Present Study

As indicated, the present study is seen as another local investigation of the efficacy of the instrument itself (again in a psychology graduate and education and development setting), toward the possibility of developing more sophisticated and elaborate types of applications vis-a-vis career development and graduate

education and development as suggested above. The present investigation again addresses the issues of (a) interrater reliability and (b) relationship between self ratings and perceptions of others--in another setting. In addition, however, the present study addresses the issue of generalizability of the original study and comparability of psychology students' preferences to management students' preferences.

Purpose(s)

The overall purposes of this empirical research were to describe values, in terms of job preferences, of another group of potential psychologists, and to compare these findings with those of the earlier studies of psychology students, management students, and job applicants over the past 30 years.

Specific sub-purposes were to investigate (1) interrater reliability of self preferences, (2) interrater reliability of preferences attributed to others, and (3) relationship between self and others preferences of another group of potential psychologists, and (4) to correlate these preferences with those of each of the prior groups.

Method

Data Collection

Participants. Participants in the present study were 66 graduate students enrolled in psychology programs at a large university in the Rocky Mountain Region. The group may be described as follows: 48% were male; 45% were in counseling, 16% were in general/experimental, and 39% were in industrial/organizational specialties; ages ranged from 22 to 46, with a median of 26; 60% were married; 70% indicated no dependents; 64% were not employed outside the University, 24% were employed part-time, and 11% were employed full-time; 25% had supervisory responsibility; 72% indicated that they provided more than half of their financial support; median reported grade point average was approximately A-; and 72% resided outside the state of the university while attending high school.

Dependent variable. As with the original study, the dependent variable in this study was the Job Preferences blank (Jurgensen, 1978). As Jurgensen indicates, although the design of the form may appear simplistic in terms of today's elaborate classifications of intrinsic and extrinsic work factors (e.g., Herzberg, 1966; Lawler, 1966; Maslow, 1970; Mayo, 1946; McClelland, 1961), it includes the ten factors generally considered at the time of its development to be of primary importance to workers.

The 10 factors are (1) Advancement (opportunity for promotion), (2) Benefits (vacation, sick pay, pension, insurance, etc.), (3) Company (employment by a company for which you are proud to work), (4) Co-workers (fellow workers who are pleasant, agreeable, and good working companions), (5) Hours (good starting and quitting time, good number of hours per day or week, day or night work, etc.), (6) Pay (large income during year), (7) Security (steady work, no lay-offs, sureness of being able to keep your job), (8) Supervisor (a good boss who is considerate and fair), (9) Type of Work (work which is interesting and well liked by you), and (10) Working Conditions (comfortable and clean, absence of noise, heat, cold, odors, etc.).

The respondent ranks the ten job characteristics under two conditions: (1) respondent's preferences (self); and (2) respondent's perception of others' preferences (others).

Regarding self preferences, the instructions read "Decide which of the following is most important to you. Place 1 in front of it. Then decide which is second most important to you and place 2 in front of it. Keep on numbering the items in order of importance to you till the least important is ranked 10. All items are important, but people differ in the order in which they rank them. Give your preferences, not what you believe others think."

The instructions for the others ratings are as follows "Now number the factors as you think they would be ranked by other persons. Consider others who are in

your type of work. Also consider those who are like you in age, number of dependents, and education. Rank the factors from 1 (most important) to 10 (least important). Be sure to give what you think others prefer."

Summary of data collection. Participants in the present study were 67 graduate students enrolled in psychology programs at a large university in the Rocky Mountain region. Participants in the original study of psychologists were 99 graduate students at a large urban university in the Southeast. Undergraduate management students were enrolled in management courses at two universities (one urban, the other non-urban) in the Southeast. All respondents completed the Job Preference blank. Each person ranked ten job characteristics under two conditions: (1) self; and (2) others. The ten factors were Advancement, Benefits, Company, Co-workers, Hours, Pay, Security, Supervisor, Type of Work, and Working Conditions.

Data Analysis

Comparisons of the demographics of the two groups of potential psychologists By inspection comparisons of demographic data were accomplished.

Self preferences. W (Siegel, 1956) was obtained to quantify the interrater reliability of the self preference ratings. Comparison of present and previous Ws was made. Rho (Siegel, 1956) was obtained to quantify the relationship between the self preference hierarchies produced in the four studies.

Others preferences. W was obtained to quantify the interrater reliability of the others preference ratings. Comparison of present and previous Ws was made. Rho was obtained to quantify the relationship between the others preference hierarchies produced by the four studies.

Relationship between self and others preferences. Rho was obtained to quantify the relationship between self and others preference ratings. Comparison of present and previous Rhos was made.

Results

Comparison of Demographics of the Two Groups of Potential Psychologists

Demographics of the two groups were essentially the same, although the present group may be characterized as containing a smaller proportion of males, a larger proportion of majors in areas outside clinical/counseling, and a larger proportion not employed.

Self Preferences

In the present study, W for self preference ratings was .40 ($p < .01$). Order of preferences was type of work (most preferred), pay, co-workers, supervisor, advancement, security, working conditions, hours, benefits, and company (least preferred). W in original study of psychologists was .38 ($p < .01$). Rho between these studies was .92 ($p < .01$).

Rho between the two sets of self preferences by management students was .54. For comparison purposes, correlations across professions were also computed and shown in Table 1. In most instances, the "across profession" Rhos are lower than the "within profession" Rhos.

Others Preferences

In the present study, W for others preference ratings was .41 ($p < .01$). Obtained hierarchy was pay and type of work (tie for most preferred), advancement, security, benefits, co-workers, supervisor, hours, working conditions, and company (least preferred). W in original study of psychologists was .37 ($p < .01$). Rho between studies was .96 ($p < .01$).

Rho between the two sets of others preferences by management students was .94. For comparison purposes, correlations across professions were also computed. In all instances, the "across profession" Rhos are lower than the "within profession" Rhos.

Table 1 summarizes ranks assigned to self and others job preferences in the four studies. Table 1 also reports the eight obtained interrater reliabilities (Ws),

the four inter-study hierarchy relationships (Rhos) within the two separate professions, the eight across professions comparisons (Rhos) which provide a lower level of generalization of findings.

Insert Table 1 about here

Relationship Between Self and Others Preferences

In the present study, Rho was .72 ($p < .05$). In the original study of psychologists, Rho was .55 ($p < .05$). In the two management student samples the Rhos were .47 ($p < .05$) and .66 ($p < .05$).

Correlations of self rankings and biographical information. Since the inter-rater agreement for self rankings (W=.40) is only moderate, it is appropriate to explore individual difference correlates of these rankings. What accounts for differences in rankings? Table 2 shows the correlation of rankings for each of the 10 job factors and four bits of information provided by the subjects. For this sample of psychology students, preferences for job factors was not consistently related to sex of respondent or current employment status. Those students who provide more of their own financial support place higher importance on working conditions and lesser importance on hours of work. For individuals with more years of prior work experience, pay and security are considered less important and hours, supervisory relations and type of work are more important.

Comparison with Jurgensen's data. Self preferences of the two groups of management students and the two groups of psychology students can also be compared with comparable subjects from Jurgensen's studies (i.e., norms). When the rankings of psychology students are compared with those of professional applicants, we see that students rank pay and co-workers more important and the company and security less important than this norm group. Management students rank pay more important and the company less important than managerial applicants in Jurgensen's norm sample.

Discussion

Potential Data Limitations

The following perceived potential data limitations are classified as either threats to internal experimental validity or threats to external experimental validity (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). An experiment has internal validity to the extent that the results are interpretable; an experiment has external validity to the extent that the (interpretable) experiment generalizes to other settings.

Internal validity. As these are self-reports, there is no check on the veracity of the reports. There is the implicit, and tenable, assumption that behavior follows reported perception.

The possibility exists that students reported "what they were supposed to report." This seems unlikely, given the non-threatening, unobtrusive, conditions under which the data were collected.

There is no measure of longitudinal stability of these self-reports. Present data do not address this issue. However, Jurgensen's data suggest stability exists; and a study by one of the present authors indicates adequate stability exists (Blumenfeld, Borek, & Zimmatore, in preparation).

It is always possible that respondents merely made random responses. However, the subsequently obtained positive indices of interrater reliability blunt this possibility.

As indicated, although essentially the same, there were slight demographic differences between participants in the two data bases for psychologists. Also, while the original school may be characterized as being "urban," the present school may better be characterized as being "non-urban." The two groups are not totally comparable, i.e., matched samples. As "cultural differences" potentially exist within and across (all) organizations, neither of these two conditions (particularly the second one) is seen as a critical limitation. Indeed, it is such a question of "cultural differences" that the research addresses, i.e., generalizability across samples.

External validity. No claim of external validity is made for this experiment. External validity is an unknown. The results are, by definition, tied to their source(s). This was the intention. It is unlikely that one could generalize from these findings to other potential psychologists. In point of fact, the question of generalizability was the thrust of the present study.

Summary. These potential data limitations are not perceived as being of sufficient magnitude to preclude data interpretation. However, once again, the caveat regarding generalization from these findings to other settings is emphasized. While the experiment has internal validity, the extent of its external validity is an unknown.

Self Preferences

W of .40 ($p < .01$), while numerically modest, indicates that self preferences demonstrated adequate interrater reliability. A relatively stable hierarchy of preferences emerged, i.e., type of work (most preferred), pay, co-workers, supervisor, advancement, security, working conditions, hours, benefits and company (least preferred). There is more consistency of preferences than one might perhaps expect. As suggested, vis-a-vis management education and development of psychologists, this information could be utilized by three interested parties--students, universities, and employing organizations. More efficient resource allocation might be accomplished.

In the original study, W of .38 ($P < .01$), also numerically modest, also indicated self preferences demonstrated adequate interrater reliability. A relatively stable hierarchy of preferences emerged, i.e., type of work (most preferred), pay, coworkers, supervisor, advancement, hours, working conditions, benefits, security and company (least preferred)

Rho between the (reliable) self hierarchies produced in the two studies was .92 ($p < .01$). This coefficient is highly significant, indicating a near perfect correspondence of the two orderings. The present sample ranked security slightly more important than the earlier sample (6 vs 9).

Rho between the two management samples was considerably lower (i.e., .54), indicating less agreement across samples. Since those students were undergraduates, it could be that homogeneity of preferences is much higher among groups of graduate students who are more focused in interests. The tentative conclusion is that generalizability of self preference findings is more possible from the results of studies of advanced students.

Others Preferences

W of .41 ($p < .01$) indicates that others preferences also demonstrated adequate interrater reliability. Once again a relatively stable hierarchy of preferences emerged, i.e., pay and type of work (most preferred), advancement, security, benefits, co-workers, supervisor, hours, working conditions, and company (lease preferred). Implications are essentially the same as those touched upon in regard to self preferences. This is, once again vis-a-vis education and development of psychologists, they have potential utility for students, universities, and employing organization toward better satisfying personal and/or organizational goals.

In the original study, W of .37 ($p < .01$) also indicated others preferences demonstrated adequate interrater reliability. Once again a relative stable hierarchy of preferences emerged, i.e., pay (most preferred), type of work, advancement, security, benefits, supervisor, hours, co-workers, working conditions, and company (least preferred).

Rho between the (reliable) others hierarchies produced in the two studies was .96 ($p < .01$). They were essentially the same. The more preferred job attributes ascribed were pay, benefits, type of work, and advancement. The less preferred job attributes were company, working conditions, and hours.

Relationship Between Self and Others Preferences

Rho in the present study was .72 ($p < .01$), indicating the two hierarchies were related to one another to a large degree. Pay and type of work are the most preferred factors and company is the least preferred factor in both self and others rankings.

On the other hand, some immersions in rank are apparent. Advancement (3 vs 5), benefits (5 vs 9), and security (4 vs 6) are perceived to be more important to others and co-workers (6 vs 3), supervisor (7 vs 4), and working conditions (9 vs 7) are seen as less important to others, in comparison with self-rankings.

In contrast, the rho in the earlier study was .55, only marginally significant. In comparing the two hierarchies in that study, it is worth noting that, while the more preferred job attributes in the self hierarchy were type of work, pay, and advancement, the more preferred job attributes in the others hierarchy were pay, type of work, and benefits. Conversely, while the less preferred job attributes in the self hierarchy were benefits, company, and working conditions, the less preferred job attributes in the others hierarchy were company, supervisor, and co-workers. Job attributes contributing most of the lack of systematic relationship between self and others ratings (i.e., sources of disagreement) were benefits, co-workers, and supervisor.

Implications and Applications for Education and Development

As indicated (and independent of the generalizability issue), in terms of education and development, these kinds of data could be of practical utility to students, universities, and/or employing organizations in terms of the processes of attraction, induction, and development associated with career motivation and accomplishment, i.e., career development.

From the student's point of view, these kinds of data could have implication and application in terms of career choice; from the university's point of view, these kinds of data could have implication and application in terms of recruiting, selection, counseling, curriculum development, and/or placement; and from the employing organization's point of view, these kinds of data could have implication and application in terms of the processes of recruiting, selection, assimilation, personnel development, and/or organizational development. The general hypothesis is that congruity leads to career choice/job satisfaction while incongruity does not

lead to career choice/job satisfaction. Further, it is suggested that incongruity leads to less efficient use of human, fiscal, and physical resources, e.g., drop-out, turnover, performance decrement.

Again, extensive discussion of specific applications is precluded by time/space contraints. As one intriguing example of application, however, Jurgensen (1978) indicates use of these kinds of data in development of recruiting devices resulted in a decrement in employee turnover. The paradigm is a form of market research (from both the points of view of the buyer and the seller). As inferred previously, additional applications vis-a-vis career development and education exist.

Summary

For these particular 66 graduate students (potential psychologists), as with the original 99 graduate students, there was a relatively stable hierarchy of self and others preferences. However, unlike the original study, the two hierarchies in the present study were much more highly related to each other.

Self preference hierarchies of the two studies demonstrated a very high positive relationship. In addition, others preference hierarchies of the two studies demonstrated a very high positive relationship. Implications and applications vis-a-vis education and development of psychologists were indicated.

Conclusions

Regarding sub-purposes, it was concluded that: (1) self preferences demonstrated adequate interrater reliability (relatively stable preference hierarchy); (2) others preferences demonstrated adequate interrater reliability (relatively stable preference hierarchy); (3) there was a moderately high relationship between self and others preferences; and (4) self and other preferences within the two samples of psychologists were nearly identical, but comparisons across the samples from one profession (psychologists) to another (managers) showed much less agreement, especially for self-rankings.

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Table 1

Group Ranks of Self and Others' Job Preferences of
Four Groups of Potential Managers and Psychologists

	Undergraduate Students in Management				Graduate Students in Psychology			
	I. Blumenfeld et al. 1980 (N=129)		II. Blumenfeld et al. 1981 (N=113)		III. Blumenfeld et al. 1982 (N=99)		IV. Thornton et al. 1983 (N=63)	
	Self	Others	Self	Others	Self	Others	Self	Others
Advancement	3	4	3	4	5	3	5	3
Benefits	5	2	10	3	8	5	9	5
Company	6	9	9	10	10	10	10	10
Co-Workers	9	10	4	8	3	8	3	6
Hours	10	5	7	6	6	7	8	8
Pay	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1.5
Security	4	6	6	5	9	4	6	4
Supervisor	7	8	5	9	4	6	4	7
Type of Work	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	1.5
Working Conditions	8	7	8	7	7	9	7	9
Intra-study statistics								
Inter-rater reliability (W) =	.26	.40	.25	.32	.38	.37	.40	.41
Correlation of self and others' ranks (rho) =	.66		.47		.55		.72	

Inter-study statistics

Self hierarchies (rho)
Within professions: I vs II = .54; III vs IV = .92
Across professions: I vs III = .30; I vs IV = .45; II vs III = .87; II vs IV = .93

Others' hierarchies (rho)
Within professions: I vs II = .94; III vs IV = .96
Across professions: I vs III = .81; I vs IV = .71; II vs III = .88; II vs IV = .86

Table 2

Correlations of Self Rankings and Biographical Information

	Sex (1=male; 2=female)	Currently Employed	Percent Financial Self Support	Year of Prior Employment
Advancement	-.09	.13	-.04	.12
Benefits	-.02	-.02	.17	-.01
Company	-.07	-.33**	-.15	.02
Co-workers	-.05	-.03	.04	-.11
Hours	-.07	.08	.24*	-.20*
Pay	.13	.12	-.01	.23*
Security	.04	.05	-.09	.20*
Supervisor	-.09	.11	.08	-.21*
Type of Work	-.06	-.15	.10	-.22*
Working Conditions	.25*	.00	-.22*	.04